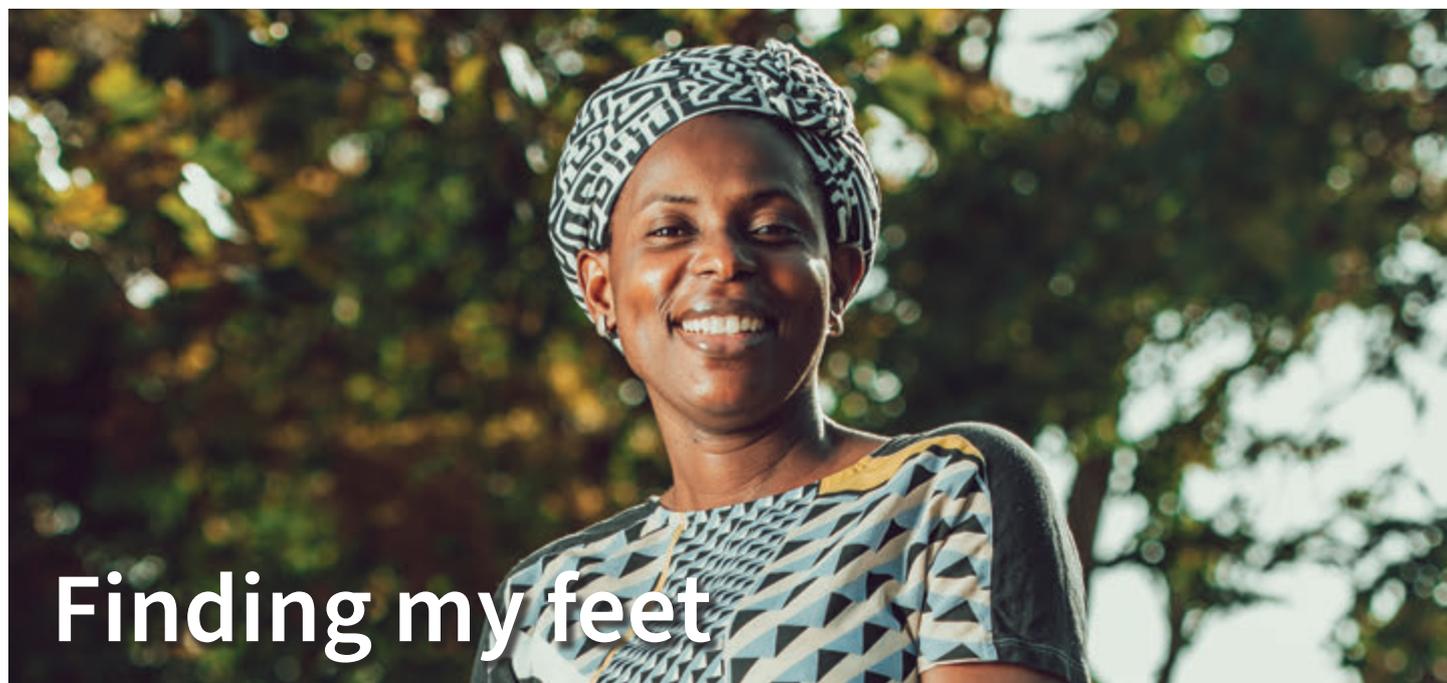


Phoenix *Flyer*

A newsletter by residents for residents



All information correct at time of printing. Please visit www.phoenixch.org.uk/coronavirus for up-to-date information.



Finding my feet

Dominique Yoboue has been a Phoenix resident for a year and lives in Bellingham with her husband and three children. Dominique has been applying for jobs with help from our Roots into Work scheme and encourages other residents to do the same.

I wanted to get back into work because my kids are now in school and I wanted to start building my career. It was difficult to find the motivation, but then I heard about the Roots into Work programme when I was at The Green Man.

I started the programme a few weeks before lockdown happened.

I was coached by Uche and in those first few weeks she'd call me and discuss training or courses that

Phoenix were offering, and to see if I was interested.

Uche was really helpful and has helped me to write my CV and apply for jobs that previously I wouldn't have thought I was able to do. I feel very blessed to have her coach me. During the lockdown, I've done an online one-to-one confidence building session which has really helped boost my confidence. Uche has also been supporting me to apply for new jobs.

Before I would see job advertisements and not even think about applying. I've always had the skills for the jobs but just not known it! Now I have the confidence I need to apply and to do the interview.

Since doing the programme, I've been applying for jobs, and recently, Uche helped me to apply for an apprenticeship with Phoenix!

The lockdown has been a tough time for all of us, whether you've been in work or not. If you want to get into work or progress your career, I'd encourage you to check out the Roots into Work programme.

It's a great way to build your confidence and get the skills you need whether it's updating your CV or knowing what to say in a job interview. The staff are really encouraging and go the extra mile to help regardless of your ability or situation.

To find out more about the Roots into Work programme, how we can help, and to sign up for email updates, please get in touch or visit our website.



info@phoenixch.org.uk



www.phoenixch.org.uk



0800 0285 700



Present and correct?

Over the coming months, we'll be contacting residents and asking you to review and confirm that the information we hold about you is correct so that we have your up-to-date contact details and other key information. This will help us deliver services that meet your needs and communicate with you in the ways that you would like us to.

Please look out for a letter from us soon. Thank you for your help to keep our records up to date.

Our first virtual AGM!

Thank you to the 100 residents who took part in this year's AGM! Due to the pandemic, spaces at The Green Man were limited, the majority of residents participated online via livestream and in advance by proxy voting.

On the agenda was accepting the financial statements, the annual report and approving the re-appointment of KPMG as our external auditor, as well as a live question session with the Phoenix Executive Team.

“Residents are the heart of all we do, as our AGM demonstrated.

Another Phoenix first as a handful of shareholders took their socially distanced seats and many more joined online – all determined to keep residents driving the business forward.” Anne McGurk, Tenant and Chair of the Board.

Serving Tenant Chair, Anne McGurk was re-elected as a Resident Board Member at the AGM. Anne McGurk became Chair of Phoenix in 2016 and has since been confirmed by the Board as Chair for 2020-21.

To read more about this year's AGM, visit our website. If you're not already, you can become a resident shareholder by calling 0800 0285 700.

The Phoenix Academy returns

The Phoenix Academy is an opportunity for members of our community to get a qualification in housing from the Chartered Institute of Housing.

The Academy will be starting again online on 10 November. For more information and to enrol, get in contact.



News in numbers



Find out more about what's going on:
www.bit.ly/EventsAtPhoenix

80 Phoenix families took part in **20** online workshops and activities as part of this year's Summer Fun.

4 new resident members joined our Phoenix Gateway Committee, following recruitment earlier this year. Welcome aboard!

In September, we offered **5** new Phoenix apprenticeships for Lewisham residents.

871 tenants and leaseholders told us how they have been affected by the coronavirus. Thank you – the results of the survey will shape our plans. Turn to page 5 for more info.

Events

Free advice sessions

Mondays and Tuesdays

Citizens Advice Lewisham is offering free and confidential advice over the phone for Phoenix residents on debt and budgeting, housing, rent arrears, family matters and employment. Contact us to book an appointment.

Online employment sessions

Tuesday 10 November & Tuesday 8 December, 10-11am

Join our Roots into Work team for these bitesize employment workshops in interview skills and CV writing. To find out more and book your place, visit our website.

Environmental improvements coming soon

We're preparing for a new environmental improvement programme which will help to make our community a nicer and greener place to live. The programme will run over 10 years and will start in 2021.

Before any works begin, we'll be working with residents to review our green areas and outside spaces to understand what you would like to see. Consultation began in October with residents who will benefit from improvements next year.

We want to provide a safe environment that everyone is proud to live in.

Works could include improvements to:

- storage for cycles, buggies and mobility scooters
- security, such as lighting
- estate footpaths, and parking arrangements
- water conservation and drainage
- family friendly spaces, including leisure and play areas
- planting
- bin stores.

To find out more about the programme, visit our website or get in touch



Proposed improvements to bin stores

Green giants

Congratulations to the winners of Phoenix in Bloom 2020!

Thank you to all our passionate and green-fingered residents who took part in our annual gardening competition, which celebrates the contribution of residents to make our community beautiful. Because of ongoing restrictions, this year we asked people to send in entries online and by post.

Barbara Perzyna, Phoenix Resident and Judges Special Prize winner:

“Being online appealed to me as I have mobility issues and so being able to enter from home made it easier”



Thank you to our special guest judges: Patricia Newman-Sheaf, Eileen Davies, Board Vice Chair Carmen Simpson, and Phoenix Estates Services Manager James Peters.

To check out this year's winning entries, visit our website.

More bang for our buck?

Our Resident Scrutiny Panel has published their latest report into Social Value, what it is and why it's important for our residents and community. Visit our website to read the report and find out more.



Book your repairs online!

We're launching 'My Phoenix' a brand-new online resident portal later this year!

Once you've created an account, you'll be able to do everything from raising a repair and booking your appointment slot, to paying your rent and reviewing and updating the information we hold about you.

The new portal will make it quicker and easier for you to contact Phoenix and is safe and secure.

Look out for more information on our website and sign up to receive an alert when the new portal is launched.

WIN WIN WIN!

Everyone who signs up to use the new portal before 31 January will be entered into a free prize draw. Watch this space!

If you're struggling to pay your rent or service charges, get in touch. We can help you to claim additional benefits that you may be entitled to.

If you need support, we're here to help.



Useful Information

Our services

We wrote to all residents in October with an update on our services during the coronavirus pandemic, and the steps we're taking to prepare for any possible further lockdowns or restrictions.

The majority of our services continue to run as normal, though The Green Man remains closed with many of our staff working from home in line with Government guidance.

We are currently booking repairs as usual and continuing to complete essential safety checks. If you have concerns about paying your rent or service charges and other bills, or if you're looking for support to find employment or training, we can help – please contact us.

We are confident that we are well prepared to respond if further restrictions or lockdowns are introduced.

Our priority over the coming weeks remains to do everything that we can to keep our residents and staff safe. If there is another lockdown, it is possible that we may need to revert to an emergency repairs only service, and potentially scale back some other services. We thank you for your understanding if this happens.



For the most up-to-date information on our services and how they're running, visit our website.

Don't struggle with the weight of winter bills

With more of us at home, we're using more energy – especially with the colder months ahead.

It's important that you let us know if you're worried about your energy bills. We can assess your individual circumstances and support you to access the help you need. We can also identify solutions to help reduce your energy bills.

You may be entitled to:

- energy vouchers
- discounted water bills
- emergency fuel loans.

Contact us today, we're here to help.

Grand designs

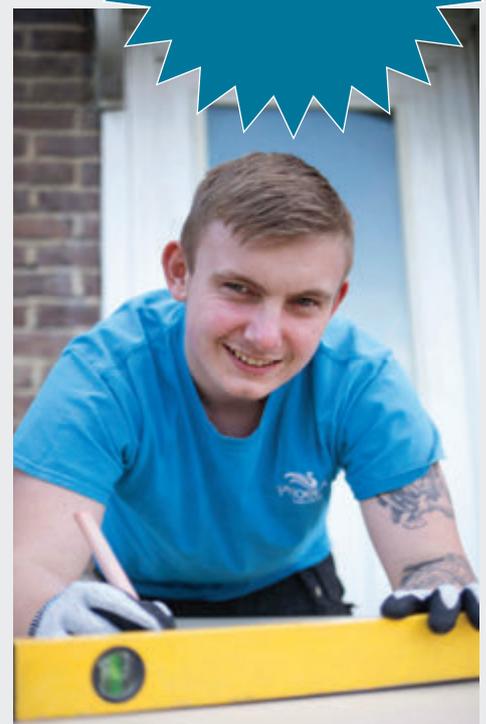
If you're considering making changes to your home, it's important that you speak to us first to get our permission. Unauthorised changes to your home could make it unsafe and will result in a breach of your tenancy agreement or lease.

We follow strict regulations and guidelines to ensure that our homes are safe and up to standard. If we do not know that changes have been made to your property, you may be putting yourself and others at risk and impact any future sales of property for leaseholders.

Changes that you will need to let us know about include:

- external works such as a lean-to, conservatory or extension
- removal of doors or walls
- removal of flooring
- bathroom and kitchen changes
- gas central heating systems including boiler, flue and chimney
- electrical changes
- drilling, cutting or sanding walls, ceilings and paneling
- alterations to mains water and waste pipes.

If you want to make changes to your home, get in contact.



Remember!
Never carry out DIY on an area where asbestos is present.

How we respond to complaints

We want to deliver the best service possible to residents and realise that there are areas where we can improve.

If you're not satisfied with us or our services, we encourage you to let us know. Your complaints are important to us – they are a valuable opportunity to learn from and help us to identify areas where we need to improve our services.

We've started using a new Complaints Handling Code introduced by the Housing Ombudsman. The aim of the code is to improve how housing associations handle complaints by ensuring that they are investigated

impartially, resolved quickly and that residents are involved throughout the process. The code is for residents too. You can use it to check whether we are handling your complaint appropriately and doing what we say we are.

We know there is room for improvement and recognise that we need to improve how we handle complaints. We're already taking steps to improve our response to complaints by providing all staff with further customer care training and consulting with residents on how we meet the new code and changes needed to our current complaints policy and procedure. We will publish our assessment of how we meet the code in December.



It's your right to complain and we want to make it easier for you to make a complaint when you need to. You can make a complaint over the phone, by email, post, in person or social media and a member of staff will be happy to speak to you. To find out more about how to make a complaint and the process that follows, visit our website or get in contact.

The Housing Ombudsman is an independent, impartial service that looks at complaints about housing organisations. If you would like to find more information on The Housing Ombudsman code, please visit: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

From April – August 2020, we...

Responded to **60%** of stage 1 complaints on time (10 working days)

Responded to **40%** of stage 2 complaints on time (10 working days)

Identified learning from **90** out of the **93** complaints we closed



The top area identified for learning was **to communicate better between teams and with residents**



We received **62 stage 1** complaints between April and August 2020 which were broken down into...

Customer Services **3%**

Estates Services **6%**

Financial Inclusion **2%**

Housing **26%**

Income **10%**

Property **2%**

Repairs **45%**

Specialist Housing **6%**



Your feedback is shaping our coronavirus renewal plans

Thank you to everyone who took part in our survey to better understand how the coronavirus has affected our community. We are using the results to prioritise services that residents asked us to, where it is safe to do so, including:

- Delivering repairs
- Opening our contact centre so all calls are answered directly by a

Phoenix member of staff.

- Offering an appointment only service at The Green Man for residents to meet essential staff when something cannot be done over the phone or remotely.

Residents also identified areas where we can do more to support you in dealing with the issues caused by the coronavirus, including help with

mental health and wellbeing, support to find work and training and activities to tackle loneliness.

You reported your highest levels of satisfaction with 85% of tenants and 75% of leaseholders saying they were satisfied with our services overall.

Find out more and read the full report on our website.

Community

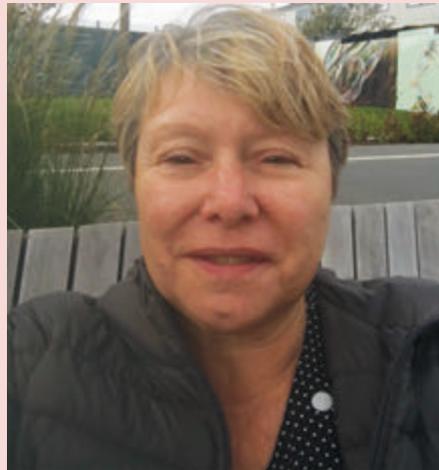
Get involved with the Phoenix Family Forum (PFF)

Join fellow Phoenix parents and carers and be part of organising events for children, young people and families in the Phoenix community.

The PFF helped plan this year's Summer Fun and ran four evening workshops for adults. If you'd like to find out more and get involved in future events, please get in touch!

Step into the editor's shoes

By Sandra Hunt, Resident Communications Group



"Being involved in the local community is very important to me, so I joined Phoenix's Resident Communications Group (RCG).

We plan, develop, discuss and make recommendations on communications that go to all residents, such as this newsletter! When we review communications, we consider how they look, what can be added and what can be done in a different way to make it easy for residents to understand.

It's our way of getting involved and ensuring we all get a good service.

We welcome any residents who want to be a member of the Resident Communications Group, join us!"

Remembering Catherine Hand

We are sad to learn of the death of Catherine Hand from Trowers, who played an invaluable role in both the creation of Phoenix and The Green Man. Catherine was pivotal in creating Phoenix and announced our official creation in 2007. Our thoughts go out to Catherine's family.

Christmas opening hours

The Phoenix Repairs Service will carry out emergency repairs only during this time and our out of hours service will continue as normal.

The Green Man will remain closed to the public for the foreseeable future. For updates visit the coronavirus pages on our website.

Connected Together

"Lockdown has been really isolating. Getting this laptop has motivated me to get involved again."

Mustapha Amroussi,
Phoenix resident.

We can help you get online with a free laptop or tablet. To find out more, visit our website or get in touch.



www.carbonbalancedpaper.com
Resource Reg. No. 2110



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™
We invest in people Gold

Phoenix
Our community in our hands

Phoenix Community Housing, The Green Man, 355 Bromley Road, London, SE6 2RP

@ info@phoenixch.org.uk

@phoenixtogether

www.phoenixch.org.uk

0800 0285 700

Phoenix Community Housing (Bellingham and Downham Limited) is a Community Benefit Society, number 30057R. VAT number 162 4926 03. Regulator of Social Housing number L4505.